CONFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-NINTH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 20 August 1970, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. M. A. HUSAIN (India)

(Previous verbatim records in this series appeared under the symbols ENDC/PV.1 - ENDC/PV.430).

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PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Argentina:	Mr. C. ORTIZ de ROZAS
	Mr. A. F. DUMONT
	Mr. V. E. BERASATEGUI
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	Mr. D. F. NATARIO
	Mr. L. F. PALMEIRA LAMPREIA
Bulgaria:	Mr. T. PETROV
	Mr. I. PEINIRDJIEV
Burma:	U KYAW MIN
Canada:	Mr. G. IGNATIEFF
	Mr. R. W. CLARK
	Mr. R. E. MOORE
Czechoslovakia:	Mr. M. VEJVODA
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	Mr. F. GAJDA
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	Mr. K. P. JAIN
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	Mr. A. SKOWRONSKI
	Mr. H. STEPOSZ
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Romania:	Mr. I. DATCU
	Mr. C. MITRAN
	Mr. N. CHILIE
Sweden:	Mr. A. EDELSTAM
	Mr. R. BOMAN

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:	Mr. A. A. ROSHCHIN
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Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General:	Mr. W. EPSTEIN

1. The CHAIRMAN (India): I declare open the 489th plenary meeting of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament.

2. With the permission of the Committee, I shall now speak as representative of India.

3. On 12 March last the Indian delegation expressed the view (CCD/PV.457, para. 24) that since the Geneva Protocol (A/7575/Rev.1, Annex VI) had firmly closed the door against the use, without exception, of all chemical and biological agents, our task in this Committee in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 2603 B (XXIV) (CCD/275) was to endeavour to reach agreement to halt the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical and bacteriological (biological) agents for purposes of war and to achieve their effective elimination from the arsenals of nations. This we have been discussing for the past two years without reaching agreement. Now that we are shortly due to conclude our deliberations for 1970 and to report the result of our efforts to the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly, it seems necessary to analyse the reasons for our inability to make progress and to consider what prospects, if any, there are for agreement within the foreseeable future.

4. There has been much discussion: there have been mapping expeditions, submission of numerous working papers, informal exchanges of views and statements by experts; but the basic difference of approach, which emerged when the United Kingdom delegation submitted in 1969 a draft convention (ENDC/255) dealing only with biological weapons, continues to this day. Massive amounts of technical data, which have been presented by one side, and also the involvement of this Committee in technical details of verification problems, have not bridged the gulf dividing the two sides over this problem. As often happens when difficulties arise in national or international affairs, a committee is appointed to go into the matter. In this case also one delegation has suggested the appointment of a committee of experts to examine verification problems relating to chemical weapons; and another delegation has suggested a committee of experts to examine verification problems relating to both chemical and biological weapons with special concern for chemical weapons. The socialist side does not favour the appointment of such a committee because, in its view, no committee of experts can help to resolve matters which essentially concern military and political decisions. Further involvement in verification technicalities may be illuminating; but we should not lose sight of the wood for the trees. It would be more worth while if we tried to understand why and how the two sides differ from each other.

(The Chairman, India)

5. In the case of biological weapons the United States and the United Kingdom have made it clear that they consider that no verification of production, testing and stockpiling is possible or necessary, but that the complaints procedure associated with the United Kingdom draft convention on biological methods of warfare and designed to deter any would-be violators would reduce to an acceptable level the risk of accepting an unverified convention. The other side agrees with that view, except for some relatively minor details and differences of emphasis. A serious difficulty has, however, arisen with regard to chemical weapons. While it is agreed that 100 per cent effective verification is neither possible nor sought, from the Western point of view a sufficiently high degree of probability of detection is necessary in the case of chemical weapons; but that view is not shared by the socialist side.

6. This problem is reflected in the differences of opinion over whether there should be one convention dealing with both biological and chemical weapons, or more than one convention dealing with both types simultaneously, or one dealing with biological weapons now and another dealing with chemical weapons later. An attempt has been made by some delegations to dismiss the issue of the unity or the separation of the two types of weapons as an unnecessary preoccupation with a minor procedural matter. But the fact is -- and I shall soon elucidate -- that it is not a matter of mere procedure but one of substance, and the longer we refuse to recognize this basic issue the greater will be the delay in reaching an agreement. Many arguments have been advanced in favour of separation and just as many against separation without either side convincing the other. It may help if we try, while taking into account the arguments on either side, to get down to the underlying concerns of both sides.

7. The United States and the United Kingdom are ready for an immediate total elimination of biological weapons from arsenals without "effective monitoring and inspection provisions", which they consider essential in the case of chemical weapons, as we see in the United States statement of 21 April (CCD/PV.466, para. 57); and they urge that there should be:

> "... a binding international commitment by the negotiation of a convention along the lines of the draft submitted by the United Kingdom" (CCD/PV.458, para. 55).

For that course of action they have given three main reasons. In the first place, it is stated that biological weapons -

> "... have never been used and few nations appear to have engaged in substantial effort to develop them". (CCD/PV.449, para. 28)

(The Chairman, India)

Secondly, although -

"... biological weapons are principally a strategic threat to large areas and to large population concentrations" (ibid., para. 27),

and -

"... infectious microbes can be a million times more poisonous than modern nerve agents" (CCD/PV.458, para. 50),

their military utility is of a very limited character because the effect of their use is difficult to predict. In support of that it is stated that -

"... the aerosolized form of a disease -- the form in which a biological agent can best be 'weaponized' and disseminated -- obviously cannot be field-tested on human populations". (ibid., para. 51)

Further, it is stated that -

"... there can be no assurance that this form of warfare, if ever begun, would not spread uncontrollably to one's own population and to still other countries, as well as to the enemy". (ibid.)

In other words, biological weapons -

"... contain their own threat of retaliation. They might spread to the armies and even to the populations of the Power that used them, without any active intervention at all by the people against whom they were used ..." (CCD/PV.462, para. 15),

as the United Kingdom representative stated on 7 April. Also, as the United States representative stated on 17 March,

"... because of the unpredictable and potentially uncontrollable consequences of biological weapons, their use could even produce global epidemics and impair the health of future generations". (CCD/PV.458, para. 51)

Thirdly, although -

"... certain biological weapons could in fact be used either for a massive first-use attack or for a sabotage attack" (CCD/PV.466, para. 61),

they are of no use for purposes of deterrence or retaliation. It is clarified that -

"... because biological weapons inherently lack reliability as an effective deterrent or instrument of retaliation, even their known retention by one State should not affect another State's decision to give them up". (ibid., para. 60)

(The Chairman, India)

It is further argued that —

"... retaliation in kind would not be the best military response to a biological attack ...

"In deciding on what action to take, the attacked country would then have to consider the unpredictable nature of biological weapons and the incubation period required before they can take effect. Few, if any, military situations can be imagined in which a State would try to redress a military imbalance by retaliating with weapons whose effects would not show up for days. Furthermore, biological weapons could not destroy the military arsenal--the tanks, planes and artillery--of an enemy, and the side that had initiated biological warfare would presumably have taken steps to protect its military forces, which would suffer far fewer casualties than would the civilian populations of both sides." (CCD/PV.458, paras. 53, 54)

8. For those very important reasons it seems that the United States came to the conclusion that it was not worth while to develop further and to stockpile biological weapons, and indeed that those weapons were so devoid of military utility and so dangerous to use that the existing stockpiles should be completely destroyed. That decision was announced by the United States President on 25 November 1969.

9. The United Kingdom has stated that it has never had and does not now possess any biological weapons, nor does it intend to develop, produce, acquire or stockpile such weapons--for reasons not dissimilar to those stated by the United States. Both the United States and the United Kingdom seek that their unilateral national decisions should be followed by similar action by other States and, as I said earlier, converted into a binding international commitment.

10. The question naturally arises: if biological weapons are of such little effective military use and are so dangerous for a country itself to use that they have been unilaterally given up by important countries possessing or capable of possessing them, what is the urgency for concluding an international agreement in regard to biological weapons without waiting for an agreement on chemical weapons? To answer that question the United Kingdom delegation has stated:

(The Chairman, India)

"... if we try to negotiate an agreement including both biological and chemical weapons we shall take a very long time, and time is not on our side. If we do not eliminate germ warfare once and for all it may soon be too late". (CCD/PV.462, para. 31)

The urgency is stressed by the expression of the fear that, while at present biological weapons may not be effective and useful battlefield weapons, it cannot be said how soon there may be a breakthrough, after which it may become difficult to eliminate this weapon from arsenals at all. So the time for action is here and now. After the compelling reasons for the voluntary abandonment of this weapon, the argument about a possible breakthrough in regard to what they have undertaken unconditionally not to develop any further does not appear very convincing.

11. Therefore, while we remain unconvinced about the reasons for the urgency of eliminating what is not regarded as a reliable weapon and what they therefore seek to destroy, the reasons given by the United States and the United Kingdom for the consideration and treatment of chemical weapons separately from biological weapons and concerning the difficulties in reaching agreement on chemical weapons within the foreseeable future need to be carefully examined.

12. In the first place, it is stated that chemical weapons are tactical or battlefield weapons, that chemical weapons --

"... are more predictable and controllable than biological weapons. Unlike biological weapons, chemical weapons can produce immediate effects - an important quality for use in combat. For those reasons, chemical weapons have obvious usefulness in certain military situations. Their military utility was demonstrated in the First World War when 100,000 military personnel on both sides were killed by poison gas and 1.2 million additional casualties were reported. Today many States are capable of producing modern nerve agents which are both more toxic and more adaptable to a variety of battlefield uses than are the First World War gases." (CCD/PV.458, para. 58)

Consequently --

"... a number of countries have a chemical warfare capability or are conducting research in this field." (CCD/PV.449, para. 28)

It is added that:

"... stockpiles of vastly more lethal CW agents exist today and military doctrine openly envisages their use on an extensive scale in war." (CCD/308, para. 4)

(The Chairman, India)

13. Secondly, the reluctance to give up chemical weapons is due to the belief that --

"... a chemical warfare capability is important for their [States'] national security. States maintain chemical warfare programmes and stockpiles to deter others from using those weapons and to provide a retaliatory capability if deterrence were to fail. ... The inability of an attacked nation to retaliate with chemicals would give a significant military advantage to any government which might decide to violate the prohibition on the use of chemical weapons." (CCD/PV.458, para. 59)

14. Since certain countries regard chemical weapons as a valuable adjunct to their military arsenals and view their retention to be essential as a deterrent and for purposes of retaliation, the United States delegation has expressed the view that --

"... they would be reluctant to give up this capability unless they were assured that all possible opponents" --

I stress the words "all possible opponents" --

"had also given it up and would not develop it again. Such assurance would be difficult to achieve even with extensive inspection." (CCD/PV.449, para. 28)

The United States delegation has defined such an assurance as "reliable and negotiable verification arrangements" (CCD/PV.458, para. 60) involving "verification by monitoring and inspection techniques" (ibid., para. 61) in which they "can have confidence that whatever bans are placed on such weapons are being observed" (ibid., para. 64).

15. On this question of verification a number of delegations have suggested procedures and administrative action for national supervision and inspection. Those suggestions include the following: the placing of all institutions engaged in chemical and bacteriological (biological) research, development and production under civil administration; unilateral renunciation of research in the production of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons; compulsory reporting to an international agency on the production, stockpiling and civilian use of chemical and bacteriological (biological) agents; stating in textbooks that the use of any chemical formula or bacteriological (biological) agent for warlike purposes is contrary to international law and liable to prosecution; creation of a government agency, on the pattern prescribed in the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs[1], to ensure compliance with the treaty; control of the manufacture, import and export of chemical and bacteriological (biological) agents and equipment which could be used for their development and production; compulsory

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1/ United Nations Treaty Series, Vol. 520, pp. 204 et seq.

(The Chairman, India)

registration of the requirements and quantity of production of chemical and bacteriological (biological) agents; stopping of training of the army in the use of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and abolition of field testing of these weapons; and so on.

16. All those measures and other similar measures that can be suggested, of which some may be regarded as more and others as less efficacious, depending on the nature of the political, economic and social system of the country concerned, have the common feature that their implementation depends on the intention and goodwill of national governments. While the sponsors of the socialist countries' draft convention (A/7655) regard national supervision of that kind, along with a procedure for complaints to the Security Council, as adequate, the United States and the United Kingdom do not regard this method as good enough in the case of chemical weapons, which they consider vital for their security from the point of view both of deterrence and of retaliation. The United States delegation has therefore stated that --

> "... openness and reporting and other measures for self-policing are not sufficient in themselves to form a verification system for a prohibition on production and stockpiling of chemical weapons. ... Economic data monitoring at best could serve as an adjunct to on-site technical inspection, some measure of which clearly appears to be required for effective verification of a chemical warfare ban." (CCD/PV.468, para. 15)

To this the United Kingdom delegation has added that --

> "... the Swedish and Yugoslav proposals presuppose conditions and political attitudes which simply do not exist universally; and I have to say that to that extent they are not, in my view, as yet at any rate realistic proposals." (CCD/PV.469, para. 17)

17. A great deal of attention was devoted, therefore, to exploring the possibilities of international controls and procedures. Verification by external means such as observation satellites and remote atmospheric and effluent sensors was suggested; but the United Kingdom delegation has stated, on the basis of technical advice, that neither of those two methods could guarantee the absence of chemical weapons from any country. To that the United States delegation added, in its statement of 16 July, that research regarding verification at the various technical stages in the production cycle of chemical weapon systems has revealed that it is not possible by means of "off-site observation" either from the air or from the ground --

(The Chairman, India)

"... to determine whether a particular chemical-processing facility or complex was producing, or was capable of producing, lethal nerve agents." (CCD/PV.479, para. 8)

18. The United Kingdom draft on biological weapons provides for (a) investigation by the Secretary-General and report to the Security Council; (b) complaint to the Security Council; and (c) withdrawal from the convention in certain conditions. Neither the United Kingdom nor the United States regards those measures as adequate for chemical weapons. The draft of the socialist countries provides for (a) consultation and co-operation among parties to the convention in solving problems relating to its observance; (b) complaint to the Security Council of suspected non-observance; and (c) control to be exercised by national governments to ensure implementation of the convention -- all of which are regarded by the United Kingdom and the United States as inadequate for chemical weapons. To strengthen the complaints procedure a reference to a conference of the parties to the treaty -- as provided in the Antarctic Treaty[1/] of 1959 and the Treaty of Tlatelolco (ENDC/186, pp. 12-33) of 1967 -- has been suggested; but even that is not regarded by the Western side as a solution of the problem of verification of chemical weapons.

19. Therefore the United States view is that for effective verification, which it considers necessary for chemical weapons, some degree of "on-site technical inspection", the nature of which has not been defined, is essential. But the Soviet delegation is opposed to any kind of on-site inspection. It stated on 3 March that --

"... verification in the form, for instance, of control posts, the dispatch of on-site inspection groups and so on would be simply impossible from the practical point of view since, as several representatives at the General Assembly pointed out, it would be necessary to have controllers in almost every laboratory." (CCD/PV.454, para. 59)

And again, on 2 April the Soviet delegation said:

"When it comes to the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological weapons whose production is directly linked with the peaceful production of chemical substances and bacteriological products, for both these types of weapons it is impossible to establish any international verification in the form of control posts and on-site inspections." (CCD/PV.461, para. 15)

1/ United Nations Treaty Series, Vol. 402, pp. 71 et seq.

(The Chairman, India)

20. The problem of on-site inspections -- the insistence by one side and the rejection by the other -- is one with which we are all familiar in another context. It is not surprising, therefore, that the United States delegation expressed the view on 21 April that --

> "None of us can be sure how long it will take us to formulate new prohibitions on the possession of chemical weapons, but clearly that process will be extensive and difficult. We hope that in this Committee we can all face this fact honestly ..." (CCD/PV.466, para. 64)

21. While there may be something to be said for that view, if any progress at all is to be made, no matter how slow, the United States and United Kingdom delegations, instead of stating what is not acceptable, should state specifically what is acceptable to them: the extent, the nature and the frequency of on-site inspection which they consider necessary. If they were to elaborate their views on what they mean by "on-site technical inspection" and indicate the kind of assurances they seek -- which, as I earlier quoted the United States delegation as saying, "would be difficult to achieve even with extensive inspection" (CCD/PV.449, para. 28) -- it might be possible to explore the possibility of achieving agreement on the basis of inspection by challenge or some other such method, or perhaps regretfully to accept the fact that no agreement on the matter is possible at this stage.

22. The answer to that question would indicate the extent to which it is really intended to do away with chemical weapons. The socialist countries have expressed some doubts about this. They do not accept the Western classification that biological weapons are strategic and chemical weapons are tactical, with the implication that chemical weapons are somehow less harmful. The Soviet delegation stated on 14 July that --

> "The other approach advocated by some countries -- to limit the prohibition, for the time being, to the production of bacteriological weapons and to deal with chemical weapons at some later stage -- would in fact mean excluding from the prohibition for an unspecified time and preserving for possible use a dangerous type of weapon of mass destruction: chemical warfare agents." (CCD/PV.478,para.113)

It also said that --

> "The United States proposal on toxins confirms our conviction that the difficulties the Committee is now confronting are related to political and military considerations and not to the technical difficulties which are formally invoked as the main problem." (ibid., para. 116)

(The Chairman, India)

23. The Deputy Foreign Minister of Poland pointed out to this Committee on 14 April that --

"My delegation finds no difficulty in agreeing with the view [of the United States delegation] that because of their nature biological weapons are very unlikely to be used.

"On the other hand, not only are we now facing the danger of chemical warfare but, as we all know, chemical methods are already being applied in an armed conflict taking place today. Therefore the obvious and logical conclusion is immediately to start negotiations which would lead to the elimination of chemical means of warfare in the first place, at the same time solving the problem of eliminating all biological means of warfare, a task which, it seems to be agreed, appears easier to achieve." (CCD/PV.464, paras. 17, 18)

24. Thus it will be seen that the priorities of both sides are the exact reverse of each other, based as they are on their different military and political doctrines. These include, among other issues, the definition of chemical weapons, the use of which is prohibited by the Geneva Protocol. It is the view of the United States and the United Kingdom and some allied countries that tear gas and other incapacitating agents are not covered by the Geneva Protocol. That view is not shared by the socialist countries and most of the other countries members of this Committee. Once a decision were taken to proceed to eliminate chemical weapons and biological weapons simultaneously, it would be necessary to define chemical weapons in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2603 A (XXIV) (CCD/275), which affirmed clearly that the prohibition embodied in the Geneva Protocol was comprehensive and covered the use in international armed conflicts of all biological and chemical methods of warfare, regardless of any technical developments.

25. It is the view of the Indian delegation that unless we address ourselves to those fundamental issues we shall make as little progress in the future as in the past towards eliminating these two weapons of mass destruction from the arsenals of nations.

26. Mr. ERDEMBILEG (Mongolia) (translation from Russian): Almost half a century has passed since this city, where we are today discussing important problems of disarmament, witnessed the conclusion of the most comprehensive and authoritative international instrument prohibiting the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons. Members of this Committee have strongly emphasized the historic significance of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 (A/7575/Rev.1, Annex VI) as an important restraining factor in preventing the use of these weapons of mass destruction. The Protocol played a definite role during the Second World War when the Powers of the anti-Hitlerite coalition issued a stern warning to Fascist Germany concerning the inadmissibility of the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons. As is known, those measures had their effect.

27. We all remember the horrible tragedy that befell Hiroshima and Nagasaki exactly twenty-five years ago as the result of the explosion of United States atomic bombs which killed or maimed approximately half a million people in Japan. Peace-loving mankind sharply condemned that atomic barbarity and launched a powerful world-wide movement for the immediate cessation of the testing of nuclear weapons and the prohibition of their use. Thanks to those titanic efforts, some success has been achieved in averting a new thermonuclear catastrophe. Today, the overwhelming majority of the Members of the United Nations are still tirelessly waging an active struggle.

28. However, there is now a new terrible danger threatening mankind, that of the so-called "silent weapons", as chemical and bacteriological weapons have been christened by the Western Press. In the post-war period, as has long been known, there have been intensive efforts in the leading Western countries to utilize the latest achievements of microbiology and chemistry for the purpose of creating new virus and microbic infections, the development of bacterial toxins, the discovery and accumulation of new poisonous substances of colossal toxicity which produce mass psychoses, annihilate the inhabitants of peaceful cities and villages, destroy crops and wipe out everything alive. We take it that the Committee is aware of the fact that in the secret arsenals of the Western Powers there are colossal stockpiles of chemical and bacteriological poisonous substances, these deadly weapons of mass destruction. World opinion is again witnessing the development, production, testing and utilization of chemical and bacteriological agents for military purposes. It knows of the laboratories, stockpiles, testing areas and factories of Fort Detrick, Newport, Rocky Mountain Arsenal, Edgewood, Porton Down and Grafschaft.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

29. Deep concern and genuine indignation have been caused among all peace-loving peoples by the United States use of herbicides against Viet-Nam, in flagrant violation of the norms of international law. Similar serious concern has been aroused by the tragic events taking place in some of the cities of Western countries where use is made of tear gas to put down peaceful demonstrations. Only people who have lost their reason can assert that biological and chemical weapons are among the "humane" methods of warfare or of dealing with disorders.

30. However, there is still another circumstance which cannot but cause us all legitimate anxiety. I am referring to the colossal stockpiles of chemical weapons held in secret arsenals whose further conservation has become extremely dangerous. As we all know, the recent transport of some "silent weapons" -- M-55 rockets filled with lethal GB gas -- for the purpose of sinking them in the Atlantic Ocean provoked the outcry -- or rather the fear and alarm -- it did in the United States itself; because such an operation could, in case of a catastrophe, cost the lives of millions of people. We have also heard expressions of alarm concerning the possible pollution of the waters of the ocean and the poisoning of its fish resources as the result of this operation. What is more, we are familiar with the facts concerning the poisoning of people and domestic animals owing to the escape of deadly gases from chemical arsenals.

31. That is the real situation today. But we should also think of the potentialities of chemical weapons as assessed in 1959 at the Fifth Pugwash Conference in Canada. The scientists assembled there found that the phospho-organic toxic substances known at the end of the Second World War were already as effective as the atomic bombs dropped on Japan.

32. My delegation has made this effort to recapitulate the foregoing well-known facts in order to emphasize once again the need for a speedy solution of important international problems, including that of the comprehensive prohibition of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons. It is with that objective in mind that the delegation of the Mongolian People's Republic was among the first to support the appeal contained in General Assembly resolution 2603 B (XXIV) (CCD/275). That appeal of the General Assembly to all States which had not yet done so to accede to or ratify the Geneva Protocol during 1970 was, as we see it, a further confirmation of the need to preserve the Geneva Protocol and to ensure its universal application.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

33. In our view, prohibition alone of the use of chemical and bacteriological (biological) methods of warfare does not fully dispose of the real essence of the problem under conditions of modern scientific and technical progress. Reality sternly demands that the prohibition should be supplemented with fuller and more comprehensive prohibitory measures, including the prohibition of the further production of these weapons of mass destruction. It was that noble purpose which inspired the initiative of the nine socialist countries that submitted at the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly a draft convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on the destruction of such weapons (A/7655).

34. In general, the draft of the socialist countries proposes a radical solution of this problem: it provides for an effective system of measures for the total elimination of chemical and bacteriological weapons. The draft convention is based on the universally-accepted norm of international law whereby the prohibition of the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons is embodied in a single international instrument — as it is in the Geneva Protocol of 1925.

35. In that connexion my delegation was interested in the statement on 28 July of Mr. Khattabi, the representative of Morocco, in which he emphasized inter alia that

> " ... military reasons should not prevent us from dealing with these two categories of weapons together and enacting their prohibition in a single instrument". (CCD/PV.482, para. 47)

My delegation would like to stress once more that it strongly favours the principle of solving the whole of this problem and of dealing with chemical and bacteriological weapons at one and the same time. That is the only correct method and the most effective one. As the course of the discussion, both in the Committee and at the last session of the United Nations General Assembly, has shown, this approach to the solution of the problem is favoured by the majority of the Members of the United Nations.

36. I should also like to mention that the common position of the sponsors of the draft convention with respect to the United Kingdom draft convention has been very clearly described by the Soviet delegation in its working paper of 6 August. Paragraph 3 of that document states:

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

"Attempts to adopt a different approach to the prohibition of chemical weapons and biological weapons and proposals to provide for their prohibition in separate agreements will mean undermining the existing generally recognized rules of international law embodied in the Geneva Protocol, which adopts a unified approach to chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons alike. In these conditions the implementation of the United Kingdom proposal, which is based on a separate approach to chemical and bacteriological weapons and provides for the prohibition of the latter alone, constitutes a direct danger in that it will promote the build-up by States of arsenals of chemical weapons and increase the risk of the use of such weapons in international conflicts". (CCD/303).

My delegation fully shares the view on this question expressed on 28 July by Mr. Vejvoda, the representative of Czechoslovakia (CCD/PV.482).

37. The Committee will recall that at its meeting of 14 April my delegation laid particular stress on the inconsistency of the arguments for a separate approach to chemical and to bacteriological weapons (CCD/PV.464, para. 42). I can only add to what was said then that the United States amendment (CCD/290) to the United Kingdom draft convention's provision concerning the prohibition of the use of toxins — whose chemical origin was referred to by the United Kingdom delegation (CCD/PV.479, para. 12), which cited document A/7575/Rev.1, paragraph 44 -- does not at all resolve the problem as a whole, inasmuch as toxins alone cannot, in our opinion, cover all other chemical agents subject to prohibition as poisonous substances that can be used for military purposes. That is why the arguments of some delegations alleging that the prohibition of solely biological weapons, with the inclusion of toxins, would not weaken the provisions of the Geneva Protocol but would strengthen them are not at all convincing.

38. I repeat that the most effective and radical solution of the matter under discussion lies in the immediate and comprehensive prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons, embodied in a single instrument. Only then would it be possible to state that the historic Geneva Protocol was being further strengthened.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

39. The Mongolian delegation has stated in some detail its views on the problem of verification, on the complex and difficult aspects of that problem (CCD/PV.464, paras. 46 et seq.). In particular we expressed the opinion that it might be possible to set up at the national level a special government agency to ensure strict compliance with the terms of the convention. We also indicated (ibid., para. 49) that the matter might be regulated along the lines of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961.1/ To the possible further measures mentioned (ibid., para. 51) I should like to add the idea that, in connexion with a national system of compulsory registration of requirements and output of chemical and bacteriological agents which could be converted into means of warfare, it might be possible also to consider carrying out continuous inspection and control of the date of production of such agents and the length of time they are kept. This might have a bearing on the problem of the international responsibility of States in cases where inexpert destruction of surplus chemical or bacteriological agents results in damage or produces harmful consequences. In this connexion my delegation would refer to article 4 of the proposed convention, which states:

> "Each State Party to the Convention shall be internationally responsible for compliance with its provisions by legal and physical persons exercising their activities in its territory, and also by its legal and physical persons outside its territory".

40. Speakers in the Committee have rightly observed that the establishment of an international system for verifying whether or not chemical or bacteriological agents are being produced for military purposes in any given country would entail exceptionally complicated and impracticable procedures owing to the similarity of the processes employed in the production of chemical and bacteriological substances both for peaceful and for military purposes. In the circumstances, the most effective and appropriate course in our opinion would be to use national means and methods of supervision.

41. I should also like to refer to the suggestion of Mrs. Myrdal, the representative of Sweden, at our meeting on 21 July (CCD/PV.480, para. 6) to include in the preamble to

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1/ United Nations Treaty Series, Vol. 520, pp. 204 et seq.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

the draft convention of the socialist countries a reference to General Assembly resolution 2603 A (XXIV), which reaffirms that the Geneva Protocol embodies the prohibition of the use of all chemical and bacteriological agents of warfare. We consider that that observation of the representative of Sweden can be examined in our further discussions. Another suggestion of the Swedish delegation, concerning the holding of a review conference (ibid., para. 18), coincides with the view which we expressed at the last session of the Committee.

42. Concerning international safeguards, the position of my delegation remains unchanged. The Mongolian delegation as co-sponsor along with the delegations of Poland and Hungary, of the working paper in document CCD/285 remains prepared to keep in touch and exchange views concerning the question of ensuring a reliable system of safeguards and an effective procedure for consideration by the Security Council of cases of possible violation of the terms of the convention.

43. A considerable time has elapsed since the Committee first took up this exceptionally important problem. Members of the Committee have taken considerable trouble to explain their positions on the draft conventions. We have heard statements by experts, and delegations have presented numerous working papers dealing extensively with the technical aspects of the question. In our opinion the excessive involvement of the Committee in discussion of the strictly technical aspects of this problem might create an undesirable situation for the majority which would in no way be conducive to a political solution of the question.

44. In concluding my statement I should like to emphasize that the Government of the Mongolian People's Republic sincerely desires to contribute to the further strengthening of the noble spirit of the famous Geneva Protocol; and this desire will unquestionably be served by the speedy conclusion of an international convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on their destruction.

45. Mr. TANAKA (Japan): Today I should like to express the views of my delegation on the question to which this Committee has to give urgent consideration, namely that of working out a comprehensive disarmament programme.

46. The Government of Japan has always maintained that in order to achieve general and complete disarmament we must work towards it by the steady accumulation and successful implementation of whatever collateral measures can be agreed upon in the meantime. My Government also believes that with a systematic approach more headway would be made in coping with arms-control and disarmament measures. It was for that reason that our delegation to the United Nations General Assembly co-sponsored the draft resolution that became General Assembly resolution 2602 E (XXIV), which inter alia requests the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament --

> "... while continuing intensive negotiations with a view to reaching the widest possible agreement on collateral measures, to work out at the same time a comprehensive programme, dealing with all aspects of the problem of the cessation of the arms race and general and complete disarmament under effective international control..." (CCD/275)

47. In this connexion I wish to pay a high tribute to the Italian delegation, which took the initiative in this matter both in the United Nations General Assembly and here in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. My delegation considers it significant that many delegations, including those of the co-Chairmen, have expressed in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament their valuable views on the question of a comprehensive disarmament programme. We share the view of the Netherlands delegation and various other delegations that the 1961 Joint Statement by the Soviet Union and the United States of Agreed Principles for Disarmament Negotiations (ENDC/5) should form the basis and starting-point for disarmament negotiations leading towards the goal of general and complete disarmament.

48. My delegation also associates itself with those delegations which have stated that in working out a comprehensive disarmament programme special stress should be placed on the close interrelationship between disarmament and international peace and

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security; on strengthening the peace-keeping functions of the United Nations; on the necessity of introducing flexibility into the disarmament programme; on the maintenance of an appropriate balance between measures to prevent armament, measures to limit armament and measures of disarmament; and on the participation of all militarily-important States and in particular of all nuclear-weapon States in disarmament negotiations.

49. As little time is left to us before the end of our summer session, I should like to urge the co-Chairman to make every effort to conclude their consultations with other delegations as soon as possible for the purpose of drawing up the draft of a disarmament programme which would reflect the various views expressed here in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament.

50. The Government of Japan believes that in a disarmament programme the highest priority should be given to nuclear disarmament. The most important event in the 1960s in the field of disarmament was the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (ENDC/226*), under which non-nuclear-weapon States parties undertook to renounce the option of possessing nuclear weapons for at least twenty-five years. My Government deems it most urgent and important that nuclear-weapon States should now take prompt and meaningful measures which will lead to the cessation of the nuclear arms race and to the achievement of nuclear disarmament. It is to the faithful and speedy implementation of the provision of article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty that the highest priority and importance should be given during the current Disarmament Decade. It is indeed encouraging to hear that strategic arms limitation talks (SALT) between the United States and the Soviet Union are making steady progress. That will greatly contribute to the easing of international tension and create a climate of confidence and goodwill which will facilitate our work in this Committee.

51. The long-outstanding issue of a comprehensive nuclear test ban is one of the most important problems in the field of nuclear disarmament. In order to facilitate the

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achievement of an underground test ban, we deem it necessary to promote the further international exchange of seismic data. In addition to the question of prohibiting underground nuclear weapons tests, the question of prohibiting tests of nuclear delivery vehicles should, in our view, also be included in the disarmament programme. My delegation feels that, as the first step leading to their prohibition, tests of strategic nuclear missiles on the high seas should be so regulated as not to impair the sense of security of other nations and not to impinge on peaceful activities such as fishing, sailing and flying on and over the high seas. Japan, as an island nation facing the Pacific Ocean, is bound to feel grave concern over those tests, not to mention the nuclear tests still being conducted in that part of the world.

52. In addition to the need for the speedy conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and the ocean floor and in the subsoil thereof, it is necessary that we tackle also such questions as the cut-off of production of fissionable materials for military purposes and the destruction of nuclear weapons, under effective international control.

53. The complete prohibition of chemical and biological weapons, which are the other weapons of mass destruction, should also be accorded high priority in the disarmament programme. We should like to urge the countries concerned, pending the complete prohibition of those weapons, to withdraw their reservations to the Geneva Protocol of 1925 (A/7575/Rev.1, annex VI).

54. The question of the mutual reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments should also be envisaged in the disarmament programme. When measures are implemented to reduce armed forces and conventional weapons, due precautions should be taken to ensure that at no stage during their reduction could any State or group of States gain a military advantage over another, and that the mutual reduction would be well balanced. In that context such elements or factors as the ratio between the number of persons serving in the armed forces and the whole population, as well as the ratio between the amounts of the military expenditures and the gross national products of

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the States concerned, should be taken into consideration. Moreover, geographical circumstances and the prevailing international political atmosphere should of course be taken into account. Also, more attention might well be paid to the establishment of a détente through such measures as the freezing of the military balance in specific areas or regions of conflict. For that purpose it may be necessary to consider the possibility of controlling the export of conventional arms to those areas or regions.

55. Before concluding my remarks I should like to touch upon two questions which should be taken into account in working out a comprehensive programme.

56. The first issue concerns systematic efforts to form a favourable climate of opinion in the field of disarmament. No matter how comprehensive and elaborate a disarmament programme might be, it could hardly be put into practice without the constant support of public opinion, which helps to form the decisions of governments. It is against that background that my delegation attaches special importance to operative paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 2602 E (XXIV), in which the General Assembly --

> "Requests the Secretary-General and Governments to publicize the Disarmament Decade by all appropriate means at their disposal in order to acquaint public opinion with its purposes and objectives and with the negotiations and developments related thereto."

57. In this connexion, my delegation is of the opinion that as concrete measures to mould public opinion the following might well be considered: (a) a periodic review by the United Nations of the actual state of the arms race and military expenditures on the one hand and of the progress achieved in the field of arms control and disarmament negotiations on the other; and (b) the periodic holding of international symposia on the question of disarmament, which might be sponsored by the United Nations or other international organizations.

58. The other issue which I have in mind is related to the furtherance of international co-operation in studies of the scientific and technical aspects of

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disarmament. Up to the present such organizations as the Stockholm International Institute for Peace and Conflict Research (SIPRI) have provided us with valuable scientific and technical knowledge on specific subjects. While highly appreciating the work done by those organizations, we deem it essential that studies be undertaken in a systematic manner and on a more world-wide basis in order to facilitate the solution of the problems of verification, which constitute the key issue in arms control and disarmament measures.

59. Mr. CARACCIOLO (Italy) (interpretation from French): In my statement on 2 July (CCD/PV.475) I dwelt on the Italian delegation's work for a detailed programme of general and complete disarmament. Its most recent step has been to prepare, jointly with a number of other delegations, a text containing some preliminary suggestions. Being convinced of the need to give practical effect to General Assembly resolution 2602 E (XXIV) (CCD/275) and in particular to its paragraph 4, we have indeed taken a great interest in that preliminary outline, the fruit of a collective effort. This outline constitutes a common foundation out of a number of requirements and considerations which, though different, nevertheless were brought closer together with a view to facilitate the work of the Committee. It is precisely the composite nature of that text which can give rise to a useful discussion within the Conference. For its part, the Italian delegation wishes to draw the attention of the co-Chairman and the other delegations to the advisability of using that text as a precise reference when preparing the report which the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament must submit to the next session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

60. Many representatives have quite recently dealt in detail in their statements with the specific problem of the detailed programme. Thus, among others, the representatives of the Netherlands, Sweden, Canada, Yugoslavia, Romania and India have expressed particularly interesting opinions, and this morning we have heard the very relevant and interesting statements of the representative of Japan. For

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our part, we believe that the preparation of a detailed programme will also be especially useful because it will give an impetus to the action of governments on disarmament. Furthermore, certain countries more than others feel it necessary to rationalize the development of the work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in order to give international public opinion clear and reassuring information on progress towards the objectives of disarmament. Of course, we realise that we must maintain a certain degree of empiricism if we wish to keep the necessary flexibility in the negotiations and adapt them to the international political context of the moment. But we are convinced that, in order not to lose its momentum in the pursuit of precise ends, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament must lay down the guidelines of its action, through the agreement of all its members and confrontation of their various points of view.

61. In concluding my statement on 2 July I refrained from any comment on the text drawn up jointly with other delegations, for fear of changing its collective nature; but I reserved the right to express later my delegation's views. I am doing that today by submitting the working document which the secretariat of the Conference has been good enough to circulate (CCD/309). The ideas of the Italian delegation therefore derive from this collective text, which it wished to emphasize and to reproduce in full in its own working document for the sake both of clarity and of consistency. Moreover, to illustrate our working paper I should like to draw the attention of the Conference to the following considerations.

62. First, in order to take account of the opinions expressed by various delegations, which quite rightly fear the fixing of too precise a timetable and thus the creation of additional obstacles to the work of the Conference, we have avoided suggesting any rigid sequence and any definite time limit for the disarmament measures we have mentioned. While we believe that the idea of sequence is implicit in the disarmament process, we agree that the sequence should perhaps arise from the very dynamics of the negotiations rather than be prematurely crystallized at the outset.

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63. Secondly, in trying to sketch the lines of a programme for the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, we have taken into account the need for our Conference to continue to negotiate actively the preventive measures and the arms-limitation measures — that is to say, those which are called by agreement collateral measures. Two of them seem to us -- and this is also the opinion of other delegations -- to be more urgent and more important for bringing about the cessation of the nuclear arms race, especially on the desirable assumption of success in the strategic arms limitation talks (SALT): cessation of the production of fissionable materials for military purposes, and total prohibition of nuclear tests. If other delegations have in mind other priorities, it would perhaps be advisable to make every possible effort to reach a common view while taking into account the specific possibilities for the success of each measure proposed.

64. Thirdly, having thus stressed the importance of collateral measures, we believe that the action of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in this field is very useful but insufficient. The main task of our Committee remains in fact to negotiate disarmament; and it therefore seems obvious to us that we must discuss this problem concretely, that fresh efforts in this specific direction must at the very least be tried.

65. That is why we are submitting to the Conference in the working paper we have presented today two parallel suggestions: to set up without delay study programmes on conventional disarmament; and to undertake to negotiate as soon as possible a first instalment in the reduction of conventional weapons. In our document we have not proposed fixed time-limits for the beginning of this negotiation; but we feel that a commitment is indispensable in order to satisfy all those who demand from our Conference more forceful action on disarmament.

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66. We feel that the study programmes, upon which we have dwelt in our working paper, could be of great use for identifying and clarifying problems and for preparing negotiations on reduction. We are also convinced that, if this method of work were accepted by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, the various delegations could more easily submit specific proposals or suggestions on conventional disarmament.

67. Fourthly, we reaffirm the need for the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to resume negotiations on general and complete disarmament. Some delegations have, in this connexion, suggested that the drafts submitted by the United States (ENDC/30 and Add. 1-3) and the Soviet Union (ENDC/2/Rev.1 and Add.1) in 1962 might be revised. These are clearly the two Powers which will have the last word on whether their drafts, which are still before the Conference, should be revised. For our part, we should like merely to express the wish that, if this is done, account may be taken of the experience gained since 1962. The Italian delegation has already had the opportunity of emphasizing, in its statement on 25 March 1969 (ENDC/PV.397, paras. 62 et seq.), in its working paper of 21 April 1969 (ENDC/245), and lastly in its statement on 26 February 1970 (CCD/PV.453, para. 16), the opinion that the failure of the efforts made in Geneva from 1962 to 1964 was partly due to the attempt to settle the whole question of general and complete disarmament within a single treaty serving as both a programme and an executive agreement. We feel, on the other hand -- still referring to the Joint Statement of 1961 -- that the negotiations on general and complete disarmament must be resumed in a more connected and more flexible manner.

68. In this connexion I should like to recall the statement of the representative of India -- you yourself, Mr. Chairman -- who at our last meeting (CCD/PV.488) summed up very clearly and with your usual effectiveness the essential facts of the problem confronting us. In our opinion the need is to prepare a programme which would serve as a frame laying down the main lines of the negotiations on disarmament; within it we could consider in particular the conclusion of a series of treaties for an effective step-by-step implementation of the disarmament process.

69. Fifthly, before concluding I should like to take up again and clarify a remark which I made at the beginning of my statement. In drawing up our working paper we have adhered to the principle of unicuique suum. In other words, we have wanted to

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distinguish between the work accomplished jointly with a certain number of delegations, and the observations and suggestions which we have added as the Italian delegation and which moreover follow the same collective pattern. We have therefore tried to maintain all the individual quality of that pattern as the expression of a point of view common to a certain number of delegations.

70. Mr. KOMIVES (Hungary): In my statement today I intend to deal with the subject of the fourth item on our provisional agenda as presented by the co-Chairmen and accepted by the Committee at its meeting on 15 August 1968 (ENDC/PV.390, para.93): "General and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control". Several delegations have dealt with that question both at the spring session and in the present series of discussions. In their statements they have all stressed the timeliness and importance of this matter, elucidated the problem from numerous angles, and made several suggestions which deserve proper attention and careful study.

71. For a statement on this subject it is hard to find a better epigraph than one of the conclusions of General Assembly resolution 1378 (XIV). That resolution, which was unanimously adopted on 20 November 1959, established in its preamble that "the question of general and complete disarmament is the most important one facing the world today". It is not only that preamble that is still valid today: equally timely is the call upon governments in operative paragraph 1 "to make every effort to achieve a constructive solution of this problem". On 20 December 1961 the General Assembly, again unanimously, approved resolution 1722 (XVI), which welcomed the Joint Statement by the Soviet Union and the United States of America of Agreed Principles for Disarmament Negotiations (ENDC/5) and recommended "that negotiations on general and complete disarmament should be based upon those principles" (ENDC/139). Those resolutions made it clear that disarmament negotiations must lead ultimately towards the goal of an agreement on general and complete disarmament.

72. As a result of several years of negotiations we now have some highly important international treaties already in force: the partial nuclear test-ban Treaty (ENDC/100/Rev.1) of 1963; the Treaty on principles governing the peaceful use of outer space (General Assembly resolution 2222 (XXI), annex), signed in 1967; and the nuclear

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non-proliferation Treaty (ENDC/226*), signed on 1 July 1968. Those instruments expressed the intention of the States parties to the treaties to make further efforts to achieve general and complete disarmament.

73. In the preamble to the Moscow partial test-ban Treaty the parties proclaimed as their principal aim "the speediest possible achievement of an agreement on general and complete disarmament ...". The non-proliferation Treaty went even further. According to article VI, the parties undertake --

> "... to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control".

The results so far achieved in restraining the nuclear arms race, and the strategic arms limitation talks (SALT) between the Soviet Union and the United States, which were adjourned last week after four months of hard — and we hope useful -- work, to be resumed in November at Helsinki, make it even more timely to continue discussion of the problems of general and complete disarmament. That need is further intensified by General Assembly resolution 2602 E (XXIV) (CCD/275), which proclaimed the decade of the 1970s as the Disarmament Decade and requested our Committee to work out a comprehensive disarmament programme.

74. Another line of action by the General Assembly -- namely, its resolution 2606 (XXIV) on "The strengthening of international security" -- and the communications (A/7922 and Addenda) which were sent to the Secretary-General by States in response to his letter and which set forth their views and proposals on this very important matter, clearly reflect the urgent necessity for various disarmament measures and for the achievement of general and complete disarmament.

75. The great political thinker of our age, Vladimir Ilyitch Lenin, whose centennial anniversary the world commemorated in April last, emphasized as early as 1916 that "Disarmament is the ideal of socialism". May I recall here that as early as the 1920s the Soviet Government worked out a proposal for general and complete disarmament? The Soviet draft treaty on immediate complete and general disarmament, which was submitted to the Preparatory Committee of the Disarmament Conference, envisaged the completion of disarmament in four phases within a period of four years (A/AC.50/2, paras. 138-140).

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76. The Hungarian People's Republic has always paid marked attention to the problem of general and complete disarmament. In multilateral treaties, as well as in bilateral treaties of friendship and co-operation concluded or renewed recently, my country has undertaken international legal obligations to continue its efforts for the maintenance and strengthening of world peace and the security of peoples. The Hungarian Government consistently strives for the lessening of international tension, the halting of the arms race and the achievement of general and complete disarmament. The experience of international disarmament negotiations has proved that here we must face an historical process and not some kind of single action. How that process develops, how fast it can progress, depend mainly upon the international political situation. Should we fail to pay due heed to that fact, the whole Disarmament Decade as well as any sort of comprehensive programme may easily become illusory.

77. We must never forget the sad reality that international peace and security are still being threatened by numerous grave events. The war in south-east Asia, the crisis in the Middle East, wars being waged against national liberation movements, the whole system of military bases on foreign territories -- all those are strong elements which hinder progress in the field of disarmament. From that fact it emerges that the main precondition for real progress is the elimination of the causes of international tension. Therefore he who really strives for disarmament should strive also for the elimination of those causes of tension throughout the world.

78. When speaking of some of the main obstacles in the way of progress towards general and complete disarmament, I should not fail to mention also certain promising developments which, if brought to consummation and given a predominant position, could create favourable conditions for making real headway towards general and complete disarmament. In that connection I have in mind the strategic arms limitation talks (SALT), the preparations for an all-European security conference, and other promising developments.

79. My delegation represents a European socialist country whose capital was the scene of the Conference of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty over a year ago. At that time the participants in that Conference made an appeal to all European States "to increase their efforts for the strengthening of peace and security in Europe" (A/7536). Let me therefore go into some details of the developments leading to that document.

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80. In recent years the realization has been gaining strength and spreading in ever wider circles in Europe that the peoples of that continent should not live in conditions that are constantly charged with the danger of new military conflicts. The countries of Europe, irrespective of their social and political systems, have one important thing in common -- they all need peace and institutionalized security.

81. Guided by that spirit, the States members of the Warsaw Treaty proposed in their appeal that "an all-European conference should be called to discuss the questions of European security and peaceful co-operation" (ibid.). Further to that proposal, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Warsaw Treaty countries, at their meetings in Prague last October and in Budapest this June, made suggestions concerning the agenda of such a conference. The memorandum adopted at the latest ministerial meeting expressed the view that the interests of reducing tension and bringing about security in Europe would be promoted by a discussion of the question of the reduction of foreign armed forces on the territories of European States. Such discussions could be held by the organ proposed to be established by the security conference, or could be carried out in any other form acceptable to the interested parties.

82. The Hungarian delegation is convinced that the convocation of an all-European security conference as a result of joint efforts by all interested States would contribute significantly to easing tension, strengthening security and developing peaceful co-operation in Europe. The incessant striving for the elimination of the causes of international tension is a very important but not the only precondition to real progress in the field of disarmament. The Hungarian delegation is in full agreement with the view of those who maintain that measures of general and complete disarmament can be properly negotiated and effectively implemented only with the full participation of all militarily-significant countries, and in the first place of all nuclear Powers.

83. We have been following with special attention and studying carefully every suggestion relating to questions of general and complete disarmament or to the elaboration of a comprehensive programme. We believe, however, that it would not serve the purpose if the Committee were to try to work out a programme confined within a framework of minute details, rigid schemes and time-limits; neither would it be

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practicable to work out an abstract programme. In our view the problem should be approached in a realistic, flexible and, above all, constructive manner. For the examination and evaluation of the contents and substance of measures of general and complete disarmament, it is most important to enumerate the problems which are the most pressing or which are the most mature for solution.

84. The greatest danger still threatening mankind is the possibility of a thermo-nuclear holocaust. That is why we must do all in our power to eliminate that possibility. Hence it follows that, in our approach to general and complete disarmament as well as in a comprehensive programme, nuclear disarmament must be given top priority. We believe that the principles concerning the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons, as declared in General Assembly resolution 1653 (XVI) of 24 November 1961, should be concretized as soon as possible in a multilateral international treaty. The conclusion in resolution 2164 (XXI) that --

> "... the signing of a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons would greatly facilitate negotiations on general and complete disarmament ..." (ENDC/185)

is constantly valid.

85. One of the most important problems connected with nuclear disarmament before the Committee is the ban on underground nuclear test explosions. The achievement of a comprehensive nuclear test ban would be a large step towards complete nuclear disarmament. In relation to that question there has been a long exchange of opinions about the problem of verification. We appreciate the efforts made to elucidate the scientific and technical details of the matter; but, as my Government pointed out in its reply to the Secretary-General's questionnaire relating to the creation of a world-wide exchange of seismological data,

> "... the solution of the problem today is not a scientific and technical question but a matter of policy decision, that of willingness to stop the underground tests". (A/7967/Add. 3, p. 24)

86. The prohibition and elimination of the other kind of weapons of mass destruction -- chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons -- is one of the urgent questions before our Committee. The negotiation and elaboration of a draft convention on that

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matter should be given priority not only in our work but also in any sort of comprehensive programme. Our attention and efforts must be focused on the statement made so rightly by the Secretary-General that States should —

> "... reach agreement to halt the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical and bacteriological (biological) agents for purposes of war and to achieve their effective elimination from the arsenal of weapons". (A/7575/Rev.1, p. xii)

87. If our negotiations on the prohibition of the emplacement of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed are brought to fruition at the present session, and if we succeed in presenting a draft treaty to the twenty-fifth anniversary session of the General Assembly, then we may have good reason to hope that the opening of the treaty to signature will be one of the meaningful highlights of that twenty-fifth anniversary session. The Hungarian delegation emphasizes, however, the necessity to pursue negotiations for the complete demilitarization of the sea-bed and the ocean floor.

88. Speaking about various disarmament questions, several delegations have referred briefly or at greater length to the subject of verification; working papers and suggestions have been presented on the problem. All this proves that members of the Committee attach great importance to the matter. Nobody can deny that provisions on verification form an integral and also an essential part of any disarmament measure. When States undertake obligations to limit their military power, they want to be sure that nobody will violate the obligations assumed, thus gaining illegal advantages over the other contracting parties. A proper and effective system of verification definitely increases confidence in a given disarmament measure. But can even the most perfect verification system make up for a lack of willingness to adopt that measure? Should we not fear that protracted debates on verification details, which are not supported by the sincere desire to move forward, will only result in increased suspicion and distrust? We believe firmly that if delegations sitting down at the Conference table were provided with the political decision to adopt a planned disarmament measure, a solution to details of verification would be found more easily and faster.

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89. Before concluding my statement let me emphasize once again that the Government of the Hungarian People's Republic consistently stands for the achievement of general and complete disarmament and wants to do everything in its power to promote that goal.

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament today held its 489th plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador M.A. Husain, representative of India.

"Statements were made by the representatives of India, Mongolia, Japan, Italy and Hungary.

"The delegation of Italy submitted a working paper on a comprehensive programme of disarmament (CCD/309).

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Tuesday, 25 August 1970, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.